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Stakeholder Technology Branch Staffing Update

Doug Bewick is joining Stakeholder Technology Branch (STB) as Senior Manager, Technical Publications. Doug will be working on several projects related to technology planning and standards.

Doug has been working with Service Alberta, and has moved to STB as part of the Alberta government's Executive and Senior Manager Mobility Program. As part of the Enterprise Services branch in Service Alberta, he had a range of responsibilities for emerging enterprise-wide initiatives such as eDiscovery and Case Management, as well as existing corporate applications and services.

Doug can be contacted by email at Doug.Bewick@gov.ab.ca or by phone at 780-427-0174.

New Education Standing Offer for Electronic Whiteboard Technology

Alberta Education has established an Education Standing Offer with *mimio*, a manufacturer of interactive whiteboard technology. The mimio interactive bar is designed to transform any flat surface into a fully functional interactive whiteboard when combined with a computer and projection device.

Education Standing Offers enable jurisdictions to acquire selected technology products from a centralized product catalogue at educational pricing levels that would not be available using independent purchasing arrangements.

For additional information about this and other Education Standing Offers please see the product catalogues found on the Learning Resources Centre website at http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca.

Jurisdictional Videoconferencing Capacity Funding Results

Videoconferencing Capacity Provincial Summary Highlights

- All school jurisdictions have increased their videoconferencing capacity as a result of this funding.
- The 2007/2008 funding resulted in the number of sites increasing from 524 sites in 2006 to 822 sites in 2008.
- Videoconferencing technology lessens isolation and increases course access for schools and students in rural communities.
  - Full-course delivery through videoconferencing was offered by 22 jurisdictions, and included a wide variety of subject areas such as math, science, second languages, music (guitar) and tourism.
  - Most full courses delivered by videoconferencing are high school math and science (78 percent).
  - Jurisdictions using videoconferencing for full-course delivery are almost exclusively located in rural Alberta (95 percent).
- There is a wide range of videoconferencing use, including teaching and student learning, administrative uses, professional development and training and specialized student services.
  - Teaching and student learning by videoconferencing was offered by 55 school jurisdictions, an increase from 26 in 2006.
  - Professional development by videoconferencing was offered by 62 jurisdictions, an increase from 28 jurisdictions in 2006.
  - Videoconferencing also increases administrative efficiencies through savings in time and travel, and provides specialized student services such as speech pathology or counseling.
- Jurisdictions are experiencing some challenges while implementing videoconferencing. The most common challenges are:
  - Timetable conflicts between schools that want to connect for a videoconferencing session;
  - Lack of IT specialists or IT support staff to keep things running smoothly; and
  - Need for professional development for teachers.

Provincial Approach to Student Information (PASI) Update

PASI began, and continues to be, a collaborative effort between school authorities and Alberta Education. It is a strategic, multi-year project aimed at ensuring that business processes and technology related to student information are effectively positioned to serve the evolving needs of Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 students and parents.

To enhance the degree of collaboration, school authorities have the opportunity to be directly involved in steering and guiding PASI over the next few years. School authorities are presently letting the PASI team know their level of preferred involvement in the various PASI committees. Invitations have been sent by the Deputy Minister to the Alberta School Board Association, College of Alberta School Superintendents and Association of School Business Officials of Alberta to name a representative to the PASI Steering Committee and to Alberta School Councils Association, Alberta Teachers Association, Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta & Alberta Technology Leaders in Education to name a representative to the PASI Advisory Committee.

Student information system (SIS) software provider integration is planned to take place between June 2009 and March 2010. The integration stage requires that some school authorities partner with their SIS providers to begin integrating PASI's enrollment capability functions into their information systems. In addition, a transitional feature called PASIprep is being developed for September 2010 implementation by all school authorities that will replace SISprep and will be used to submit SIS files to Alberta Education.

For further information, contact Sam Radke, PASI Project Director, by e-mail at Sam.Radke@gov.ab.ca or by phone at 780-427-6930.

Inspiring Education Update

Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans will provide Albertans with the opportunity to shape the future of education in this province through a unique public engagement initiative in 2009.

In addition to consultations planned for across the province, there are many ways for individuals to add their voices to the discussion, from participating online through to hosting a conversation. The Minister's Inspiring Education blog and conversation kits are available online at www.inspiringeducation.alberta.ca under 'Become Involved.' The password for the protected site is G4tphoto$.

Inspiring Education can also be followed on Twitter at http://twitter.com/InspiringEd.

Alberta Education Job Opportunity

Alberta Education is currently looking for an Executive Director, Curriculum. This position will have a direct impact on the development of the Alberta Education programs of study, curriculum frameworks and the associated print, digital and distributed learning resources including distance and e-learning.

The deadline for applications is June 5, 2009. For more information, visit the job posting website.

Excellence in Teaching Awards Celebrate Alberta's Outstanding Teachers

Twenty-three teachers from across Alberta were recognized for their outstanding creativity and inspiring work in the 2009 Excellence in Teaching Awards. These teachers, nominated by their peers and the public, will be recognized at an award ceremony and dinner in Edmonton on May 30, 2009.

Three teachers received the SMARTer Kids Foundation Innovative Use of Technology Award. As in previous years, these teachers will receive a technology package for use in their classrooms, including a SMART board. Sherri-Lynn Fricker, Joshua Hill and Trenton Lunde received the Innovative Use of Technology Awards.

Sherri-Lynn Fricker teaches at Fort Saskatchewan Elementary School in the Elk Island Public School Division. In addition to developing her own skills through online learning activities, Sherri-Lynn uses technology throughout her daily instructional practices. As a technology leader, she shares her knowledge with other teachers, including through sessions at district professional development days.

Joshua Hill teaches at Langdon School in the Rocky View School Division. His students learn in a collaborative environment working with laptops in a flexible setting. Joshua's class connects with other classes through the use of web-based technologies. He also travels to other schools in the division to share his ideas and expertise with other teachers.

Trenton Lunde teaches at Grand Centre Elementary School in the Northern Lights School Division. His students read, write, view, research, communicate and make presentations using a variety of technology. Trent has also guided colleagues in moving along the technology continuum.

For more information on these awards, visit the Excellence in Teaching Awards' website.

Research Articles

State of E-Learning in Canada – May 2009

This new Canadian Council on Learning report looks at e-learning in Canada, and affirms that is can be used to improve Canada's economic competitiveness and prepare Canadians for the demands of the 21st century. According to this report, e-learning – the application of technologies such as computers and the internet to education and training – is recognized as a fundamental tool for fostering a lifelong learning society. The report shows the current state of e-learning in Canada with comparisons to other countries. To access this report, click here.

Leadership for Web 2.0 in Education: Promise and Reality – May 2009
This Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) research report was conducted by the Metiri Group, and documents the Web 2.0 policies, practices and perspectives of nearly 1,200 school administrators, including school district superintendents, curriculum directors and technology officers. *Leadership for Web 2.0 in Education: Promise and Reality* addresses the extent to which U.S. schools are redesigning teaching and learning to leverage the potential of Web 2.0 tools. To access this report, click here.

Tools4Teachers Updates

New Resources

The following resources are posted on the Tools4Teachers site:

- Social Studies 10-1 Teacher's Guide

- Social Studies 10-2 Teacher's Guide

The Tools4Teachers website can be accessed at http://www.tools4teachers.ca. Contact your school administrator for a login and password.

For more information, contact Lori Ristoff at Lori.Ristoff@gov.ab.ca.ca or by phone at 780-674-8719.

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